

## SoloWorks - Community Sponsored Job Creation Initiative

### What is it?

SoloWorks is a program model for creating economic base jobs in a community or region by recruiting, starting and expanding jobs that can be done remotely; from home, a co-working space or a mobile platform. The program can generate new economic base jobs faster and at a lower cost than traditional economic development programs and is one of the few program options available to rural communities and regions that lack the assets to compete for traditional attraction and tourism strategies. The program effort has a very low cost of entry, will generate new jobs immediately and can be funded on a post-performance basis thereby avoiding costly up-front investment in marketing, sales and real estate capacity required by traditional efforts.

### How does it work?

The community funds a customized program staffed and managed by the SoloWorks contract team to recruit local residents who are interested in full time solowork, train them, place them and support them through their career.

Goal: Create and support permanent full time economic base jobs to grow the economies of participating communities

Program Focus: Economic base work that is performed at home, on a mobile platform or in a co-working space. It includes W2 work for established employers, 1099 work, elf-employed, consultants, contingent workers, etc.

### SoloWorks Team

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- **CELab:** Program architecture, Community Liaison, Metrics
- **DigitalWorks:** Job development, screening, training and placement
- **FatPipe:** Co-working system management and solopreneur development
- **Circles USA:** Pre-program preparation and support for the hard to employ

### Local Partners

- City, Village, County, COG
- NMEDD
- Main Street
- NMDWS
- SBDCs
- EDOs
- Chambers of Commerce
- USDA, EDA
- Incubators and Accelerators
- Coworking Spaces
- Community Colleges
- Social and religious institutions

### Elements

- Local economic development plan in place
- Recruiting and intake
- Assessment and testing
- Training and job targeting
- Placement and stabilization
- Solo support and advancement

- Economic impact assessment

### Program attributes

- No/low risk, program funding is post performance
- Does not require up-front investment in marketing, sales and RE inventory
- Low cost of entry
- New jobs are created in first six weeks of the program
- Highest rate of return on program cost in the industry
- Sustainable.
- Airtight attribution and longitudinal performance accounting

### Community Requirements for full operation

- Local economic development plan in place
- Facilities
  - o 1500-2500 sqft storefront
  - o High Speed internet 10mbps down, 1.5 up
  - o 2 private offices
  - o 6-8 workstations
  - o 10-12 training stations
  - o 12-15 Analog phone lines
  - o High Visibility
  - o Regional cluster for program synergy
- Community Support
  - o Funding and in kind support from:
    - City, County, CoG,
    - Local Workforce Board, State DWS, HED
    - EDD, Local EDOs, Chambers, SBDCs, Incubators
- Binding commitment to reimburse \$2,500-3,500 per job for the initial trial
- A highly competent local director
  - o Capable of running each element of the program
  - o Highly invested and committed to success and advancement
  - o Paid out of program budget
- Approval of a 3 year plan for phases 1-2 contingent on a successful pilot

### Funding

- Requirements
  - o \$50-100K for furnishing/startup expenses depending on local availability and hard asset contributions
  - o \$20-30K per month of operation
    - \$15K for Personnel
    - \$3-5K for Facility expenses
    - \$3-5K for overhead
- Proposed Sources
  - o JTIP
  - o LEDA
  - o Higher Education
  - o Workforce Boards

- Economic Development grants

## Program Phases

### Phase 1

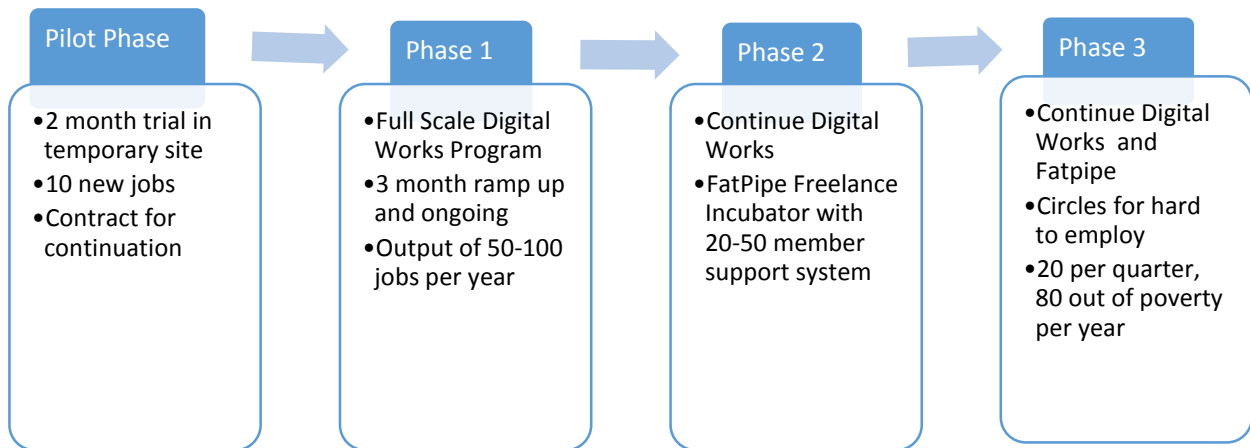
- Matriculation, assessment and training
- Placement in new full time/part time jobs in 4-6 weeks
- Post placement program support

### Phase 2

- Expansion of post placement program to include recruitment of local candidate soloworkers who rather than work a w2 job for an out of state employer, work as a freelancer or in the gig economy

### Phase 3

- Expand the program to include solutions for serving the hard to employ and chronically poor members of the community so they can be included in the pool of candidates for employment.



## Three Year Outcomes

(Hypothetical for county size of 30,000 or town of 10,000)

- Digital Works: 200 new economic base W-2 remote work jobs with a wage rate of at least \$15/hr created.
- FatPipe: 150 Freelancers started up, expanded and supported.
- Circles: 30 hard to employ residents out of poverty.